

Cultural Survival for East Timor

Appeal for the establishment of a self-supporting cultural learner centre for the refugees of East Timor

In 1975, a week after East Timor gained its independence from Portugal, it was invaded by Indonesia. Since then more than 200,000 East Timorese have been killed: one person in three. In no uncertain terms, this is genocide.

East Timor has also suffered cultural genocide.

East Timor was home to more than 30 languages and dialects. Today, only Bahasa Indonesian is taught in schools, and native languages and traditions are discouraged. Every aspect of the native culture is being destroyed on this wartorn island. Timorese languages and cultures stand on the brink of extinction.

Until East Timor regains its independence, the only people capable of preserving and renewing the rich cultures of East Timor are Timorese refugees living in other countries. One of the largest refugee communities is settled near Darwin, Australia, the nearest city to East Timor itself. They intend to establish a cultural centre that will teach present and future generations the culture, traditions, language, history and geography of East Timor. Teaching will be carried out in Tétun, the common language of East Timor.

As well as teaching, the cultural centre will edit and publish books, do translations to and from Tétun of other valuable texts, and help preserve the myths and legends of East Timor. The Timorese near Darwin intend to build their own school and be self-sufficient in every aspect of life including food, shelter, clothing, water and renewable sources of energy in tune with the environment of the region.

This ambitious project is already under way, but it needs to raise start-up costs. We appeal to you to support generously the goals and aspirations of these displaced people. Please send donations payable to "East Timor School" to:

Account # 3804
Bread and Roses Credit Union
248 Danforth Ave. #211
Toronto, M4K 1N8

or

c/o ACT for Disarmament
736 Bathurst Street
Toronto, M5S 2R4





EAST TIMOR ALERT NETWORK

2120 West 44th #104, Vancouver B.C., V6M 2G2

PO Box 2002, Station D, Ottawa Ont., K1P 5W3

✓ PO Box 562, Station P, Toronto Ont., M5S 2T1

Michio Takahashi

Here is our leaflet for
Canadian Committee Supporting
Darwin East Timor School.

Project Co-ordinator is Angelo Gonsalves
(who you met in Toronto). He will
be writing to you soon about
the project.

Peace and solidarity,

David Webster
ETAN /Canada